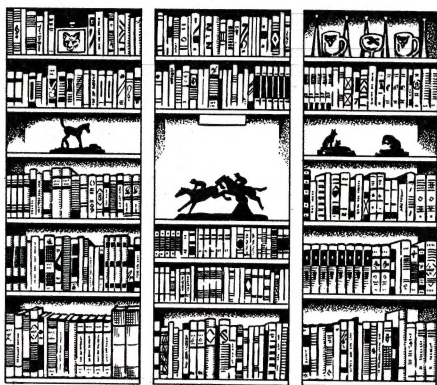


HUNTING IN CRAVEN.



Ex Libris
JOHN AND MARTHA DANIELS



To

Mrs May Spencer
Raggs

Totterdale

From

W. J. Gomersall

Hampstead

Jan 22. 1916.

With the best
of wishes
for her
health & wealth.

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

HUNTING IN CRAVEN.

BY WM. GOMERSALL.

SKIPTON :

PRINTED AT THE "CRAVEN HERALD" OFFICE, HIGH STREET.

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DEDICATION.

I AM FAVOURED WITH THE KIND PERMISSION
TO DEDICATE THIS VOLUME,
HUNTING IN CRAVEN,
TO
SIR MATHEW WILSON, BART.,
WHO, FIFTY YEARS AGO,
HUNTED THE DISTRICT WITH A PACK OF HIS OWN,
AND BUILT NEW KENNELS FOR
THE CRAVEN HARRIERS,
WHICH HAVE SINCE THEN BEEN, AND ARE TO BE,
THE HOME OF THE HOUNDS
THAT HUNT THE DISTRICT OF CRAVEN.

WM. GOMERSALL.

OTTERBURN-IN-CRAVEN, VIA LEEDS,
NOVEMBER, 1889.

P R E F A C E .

Anyone who comes to a determination to write and publish a series of chapters, whether of traditional lore or old historical accounts of sport, or even more modern incidents in connection with sporting, or perhaps the best runs, or the best of seasons, or it might be the best of masters or huntsmen of a pack of hounds; every reader of such chapters, when they arrive at the book form, will gladly accept the references made to those kind sportsmen who so willingly supplied the author with many reminiscences of passing incidents or the more entertaining accounts of what happened in a by-gone time.

MR. WASNEY, of Fence End, near Thornton-in-Craven, favoured me with a brief but historical account of the Craven Harriers, for he had followed them from his boyhood; and in the prime of life, a season never passed without one of his Hunting Breakfasts being given to several of his Craven friends.

For traditional lore and well-told tales it is with much satisfaction that I refer to the pleasant hours spent in the company of MR. ROBERT BIRTWHISTLE, of Skibeden.

MR. COULTHURST, of Gargrave House, also kindly gave me information on this subject, and the late MR. CHRISTOPHER INGLEBY, of Austwick, told me how he bred his hounds from the Craven, and afterwards returned Proxy and Pilot, those good "road hounds."

The dedication of this book will be a proof of the esteem and an acknowledgment for the kindness conveyed to me by SIR MATHEW WILSON's letters on the subject, which I received from Brighton.

I must leave all the rest to the judgment of the reader as to whether my efforts to hand down to future time some account of the Craven Harriers may meet with their pleasure and praise. The sport I had with the Harriers, and the pleasure of writing this book about them, will, I trust, prove of lasting interest to the sporting gentlemen of Craven.

THE AUTHOR.



HUNTING IN CRAVEN.

CHAPTER I.

Here the brave Percys, foremost in the chase,
Were followed by the sons of Clifford's race :
Listers and Tempests on the jocund morn,
Obey'd the cheerful summons of the horn ;
Malhams and Martons on their hunters fleet,
Scatter'd the moorland moss beneath their feet.

“AIREDALE IN ANCIENT TIMES.”

HARRIERS AT BROUGHTON HALL—MR. DYNELEY AND
MR. BENSON'S HOUNDS AT HALTON EAST—TOM CHAMBER-
LAIN—SKIPTON SPARKS—A STORY OF A “STAG”—AN
IMAGINARY PICTURE—No Go.

THE Percys and Cliffords have long long since
departed from the district of Craven, but it
nevertheless retains many memorials of those
noble families. The Malhams and the Martons have
become extinct, or have merged into other families,
while the Listers and Tempests are still represented by
the Noble Lord of Gisburn Park and the Baronet of
Broughton. Harriers were kept at Broughton during
the latter half of the last century, but I have found it

impossible to obtain any exact information about hunting previous to that period. During this period, however, several small packs were kept at various places. Mr. Dyneley had a small pack at Halton East, and after him Mr. Benson had some at the same village. It is said that when Mr. Benson sold his hounds they were shipped to America, so it may be reasonably inferred they would figure among the first emigrants in the hunting line to that continent. A Skipton pack was kept by subscription, and Mr. Tom Chamberlain figured as a great man in "the company." Chamberlain owned a noted animal called by the significant name of "Croppy." If his ears were made "barbarously" short it is said that his stride was so great as to entirely take away any attention to his terrier-like appearance above the bridle. There were "Skipton Races," too, about this time, and Chamberlain kept racehorses, so if "Croppy" ever ran it may be inferred that his stride would enable him to get his head in front, and so insure a correct decision from the judge of the Races. It is said that this "company" of "Skipton Sparks," as they were sarcastically called, were frequently playing their tricks upon some one or other.

There was a fondness and a fashion among a certain class at that day for such fun and foolery. Mr. Stephen Tempest hunted his own side of the country at this time. He had not much sympathy with this lot of irregular Skiptonian hunters. They were perfectly well aware of this, and determined that he should be favoured with one of their jokes. The story is too amusing to be lost, so it is given here to obviate such a misfortune, as it

happens to be of a harmless though practical and ingenious character. If the Squire of Broughton did (and tradition says he did) fall into the trap, it only proves how well the plan of these jokers had been conceived and carried out. As the story runs, the Skiptonians got a donkey that was well known in the town by the name of "Jerry Bucker," and fairly well, it was said, that "Jerry" looked, after his head had been artistically but firmly adorned with a pair of old antlers that were procured for the purpose. Thus dressed up in pantomime fashion "Jerry" was taken in the dead of the night to an outlying pasture near the moors on the Manor of Broughton. Word was at once sent to "The Squire" in a very roundabout way, that "a deer had been seen near the moor, not far from an old oak gill." As it was no uncommon circumstance for a deer to stray away from his native park and pasture, it seems possible The Squire might contemplate a good run if this "outlying Stag" could be found. And here I must draw an imaginary picture !

A fine autumnal day, when all the air is still, and the morning sun light mellowed by the rising mists gave warmth and beauty and quiet loveliness to the swelling and expanding uplands. Ah ! and few countries can boast more lovely landscapes than the many varied and expansive ones to be found among the round green hills of Craven. The brown heather of the Carlton Moors would form on this special autumnal morning a most appropriate background to the picture of a Squire and his hounds, huntsman, and attendants, pacing the large pastures lying between his mansion in the vale and those

romantic outlines of heather miles away. From the summit of some one or other of the elevations he was traversing he could hardly avoid a contemplatory survey of the extensive scenes around. There, right in front, and only a few miles away, is the immense dark mass of the mighty Pendle, bearing down like some terrible demon ship right into the great Bay of Craven, with its thousand green hills that resemble as many gigantic waves in a storm-troubled sea. Far away in the north-west, towering so light and tall, his white precipices lit up by the morning sunshine, stands the stately Ingleborough ! On the north the horizon is bounded by the white limestone scars of Malham Moors, and on the east the more sombre masses of Crookrise and "Barden's Dark Fells," while far, far away, the eye would rest on the cloudy heights of Great Whernside, that frowns above the dwellers among the tributary Gills of the infant Wharfe.

How exhilarating to a well-mounted sportsman such a fine romantic and extensive scene must have been. Probably the Squire felt it to be so, and imbibed fresh impulses from the rapid survey. Be that as it might, he and his huntsman had hitherto failed to come across the track, or to rouse from his lair the "outlying Stag." Now, just on the declivities of these Carlton Moors, there's many a "dingle and dell," and it is not at all unlikely but the "Skipton Sparks" would plant their "Jerry Deer" under the shelter of one of those little belts of timber, where "Jerry" would rest nice and warm, sheltered from any fickle blast that might haply blow by the few stunted old oaks or birch, relics of those

ancient forest glades which once upon a time dominated the hollows and gills of all the country round. After a long and fruitless search the Squire and his huntsman, suddenly turning a corner of one of those thickly wooded little spots, caught a sight of the long looked for "Stag !"

Clap on the hounds, the quarry's here !
And chase, oh chase the flying deer !
But sooth to tell, no deer would fly,
The "donkey" cried "Hic oh ! Hic Hi !"

The attempt to fix the date of this incident in Craven Hunting has been unsuccessful, but the probabilities, however, point to the "double nine" in the last century.





CHAPTER II.

“The late Mr. Stephen Tempest was master when I first began, at six years old. Wheelhouse was huntsman, and rode a grey horse, ears cropped, according to an old barbarous custom of former days.”—MR. WASNEY.

S.P.C.A. CROPPED HORSES—DEATH OF STEPHEN TEMPEST, ESQ.—J. N. COULTHURST, ESQ., TAKES THE HOUNDS—QUEST HUNTING—NEW KENNELS AT BROUGHTON—SIR CHARLES TEMPEST—A TWO HUNDRED POUNDER—THE LANCASHIRE CONTINGENT—HOUNDS V. SHORTHORNS—FARNLEY TO WIT.

NO sportsman living in Craven could go so far back, on the 11th of February, 1881, the date of the letter from which the above is an extract. Clearly, from this statement, the society which rejoices to be known by the imposing initials S.P.C.A. had either not been established, or, if it had, its provincial operations had not been extended to this part of Yorkshire, otherwise how could Mr. Tom Chamberlain and his “Croppy” have escaped the reporter, and as for “Wheelhouse, the huntsman,” and his master, they certainly would have come under the inspection of the officer, especially if that important person ever gave himself up to a day “in pursuit of the timid hare.” This

cropping disappeared with the death of the huntsman's grey horse, for the country had begun to see that they had been docking the horse at the wrong end.

The meets of Mr. Stephen Tempest's hounds were chiefly confined to his own side of the country, his extensive estates affording ample scope for the sport, without the necessity for going, except as occasion or invitation might direct, to any other parts of the district. It is said both his hounds and his horses were of good quality, and that he kept up the sport in a high spirited manner for more than a quarter of a century.

After Mr. Stephen Tempest's death, which event happened in 1824, the hounds were removed from Broughton to Gargrave, where J. N. Coulthurst, Esq., of Gargrave House, kept them a few seasons. During his mastership it is said the practice was to meet much earlier than the present nearly mid-day fashion, so that the hounds might quest the hare to her seat. To this kind of sport Mr. Coulthurst was said to be partial.

“ 'Tis instinct that directs the jealous hare
To choose her soft abode : with step reversed
She forms the doubling maze ; then e'er the morn
Peeps through the clouds, leaps to her close recess.”

THE CHASE.

The practice of quest hunting had this advantage, if there had been a hare on foot during the night she was certain to be found by the early quest, and the sport was accompanied, too, by a large amount of “ the music of the chase.”

There's no pleasure can compare
Wi' the hunting o' the hare,
In the morning, in the morning,
In fine and pleasant weather.

Chorus.

With our horses and our hounds
We will scamp it o'er the grounds.

“SOMERSET HUNTING SONG.”

“Questing” meant early rising, and an early meet leaves no time for your morning paper after breakfast. It's the early morning train, and the prompt delivery from the post office of the early edition of your county paper, Red, White, or Blue, that has turned the minds of sportsmen from quest hunting. During the few seasons that the hounds were under the mastership of Mr. Coulthurst new kennels had been built at Broughton, and then the time arrived for their return to their former home, and be hunted by a Tempest once more.

Sir Charles Tempest carried the horn himself, kept his pack up to the mark in every way, himself and his whips being always well mounted, and the meets were extended to nearly every part of Craven. It was at this period that the name of The Craven Harriers was that by which they were generally known. A bright bay, with a white streak down his face, was one of his noted hunters, and was said to have cost £200 ; a figure (or thrée figures, as the reporters of the present day are fond of putting it) that had never before been heard of in all the country round as the price of a horse. The appearance of this pale-faced costly horse brought numbers to the meets, both mounted and on foot, “just to look and see how he went if for nought else,” as an old farmer

said, who had "he reckon'd, bred a good 'un or two in his time." Whether it proceeds from jealousy, or an inclination to doubt the genuineness of good looks, they seldom fail to arouse detraction ; and so this very handsome white-faced hunter was sneered at by one as a "good-like nought," while another said "he did not care for your high priced cattle," for in his opinion all the best work in the hunting field was done under fifty.

Hunting was uninterruptedly carried on from the Broughton Kennels for some half a dozen years, and the various meets were well patronised by the squires and farmers of the district, and notably so on the western side, where a Lancashire contingent

"Obey'd the cheerful summons of the horn."

Eventually several of the gentlemen from "over the border" had their horses located at "The Swan," at Gargrave, where a new stable was built for their accommodation. And thus the sport went merrily on, for the Lancashire gentlemen were most of them keen sportsmen and hard riders. There's nothing like your hard riders for waking up enthusiasm.

The Harriers were destined to leave the shady groves of Broughton once more, for during those happy years there had been springing up another and a strong attachment, it may not be said, stronger ; for Sir Charles retained his love of hunting, as the handsome luncheon proved, which he gave many years after when his nephew, Mr. John Coulthurst, was Master of the Craven Harriers. It would be in the spring of 1834 that Sir Charles sold his hounds. It may look somewhat like a

trespass into another manor to introduce a subject here of an entirely different character to hunting reminiscences, but so far from having nothing to do with the subject, it has many times been the very thing that has decided many a good and zealous sportsman, who throughout his manhood has been very warmly attached to the chase, to give up in late years those fondly cherished pursuits. We have only to go into the adjacent valley of the Wharfe to find that at Farnley Hall the kennels were turned into calf-pens. "Part of the farmyard buildings once composed the ancient kennels from which Mr. Fawkes, in his younger days, was wont to ride forth at the head of his harriers."* And how "the shorthorns from those buildings gained many honours at County and Royal Shows." A fine herd of high-bred cattle had been rapidly increasing at Broughton, and that fact must be taken into account in this retrospect. Between "Hunting Horn" and "Shorthorn" perhaps the Baronet found himself on the "horns of a dilemma." Did the old threadbare couplet trouble the mind of the Broughton Baronet.

"How happy were I with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away."

The Gold Medals from Smithfield and the numerous Prizes at County and Royal Shows came rapidly as some slight consolation for the sacrifice that was made when the Hunting Horn was abandoned, and the eye found a solace in the pictures of red, white, and roan.

* "The Druid."



CHAPTER III.

“His glossy skin, or yellow pied, or blue,
In lights or shades by nature’s pencil drawn.”

THE CHASE.

MUTTON AND DOG—A RUM COMPOST — LEMON AND WHITE—OVER THE WATER TO BELGIUM—WATERLOO AND OTHER VETERANS—WHAT’S TO BE DONE NOW?—A SPORTING LAWYER—A SCRATCH PARK—MR. BIRTWHISTLE’S MUSICAL DOGS—A COMMITTEE—NEW KENNELS.

THE season after the hounds had departed from Broughton the Squire of Eshton Hall came forward to hunt the Craven country. Mr., now Sir Mathew, Wilson, Bart., bought a pack of hounds from Mr. Horsfall, who had been hunting a portion of the Wharfe valley; but, strange to relate, they turned out very badly, becoming so fond of chasing Mutton and Dog that they were obliged to be brought to an untimely end. But the genius who presided over the vineries at Eshton saw a timely beginning in their destruction for the making of such a heap of compost as should keep their memory green in after years. Partly through the following narrative and perhaps his own, for he wrote a book on the cultivation of the vine. No account was

kept of the number of bottles of rum served out of the Eshton cellars to the spademen, who had the disagreeable task of preparing and turning over that wonderful doggerel composition, but it has always been said they were both plentiful and strong. The compost must have been strong, too, for its fertilizing influence upon the vine-borders at Eshton was of such a potent nature that the grapes sent for competition to the South London Horticultural Exhibition, at Chiswick, outshone all competitors and carried off the prizes. Having thus got rid of the Mutton Dogs, Sir Mathew's next pack was mostly made up from the Harriers of his uncle, the Rev. T. Furness Wilson, who lived many years at Kildwick Hall, and kept hounds there, as he had previously done at Otley. The rev. gentleman was a keen sportsman, and it is said on one occasion, being complimented on the excellence of his sermon, he sharply replied:—"I'll preach with any man, shoot with any man, but hunting's my delight." We may be sure that one of the delights would be some handsome hounds, and so they were "a beautiful pack, chiefly lemon and white." So wrote Mr. Wasney, and Sir Mathew has confirmed the statement. After a couple of seasons' hunting they were disposed of for shipment to Belgium, and Jack Holmes, the huntsman, went with them. Holmes had previously had some experience in the Wharfe valley under Mr. Cunliffe, about Addingham. With this pack, however, Holmes hunted for a couple of seasons over the plains of Waterloo and other classic battlefields of that country. Tiring of a strange land, he returned to his native country, and again became huntsman to the Craven Harriers. And thus it

not unfrequently happened when Col. Horton (who was present with his regiment at the Battle of Waterloo) was out with the Craven Harriers, there were two Waterloo veterans hunting with these hounds at the same time, and it sometimes happened that a couple of Judges were present also in the persons of that most eminent and oldest of County Court Judges, Mr. Ingham, of Marton, and the equally well-known Coursing Judge, Will Nightingale. This was a circumstance that could hardly have a parallel with any pack of harriers in this country. The old Colonel seldom missed a meet unless it was one at a considerable distance, as when he resided at Halton Place he was quite on the extreme West of the district. He, however, always appeared to take great interest in "The Sport of Kings" and "The image of War without its guilt." When the "Lemon-and-White Pack" had been shipped from their native shore to hunt over the undulating plains of Belgium, and Craven was again without a pack of hounds, sportsmen shrugged their shoulders, and put to each other the important question, "What's to be done now?" A bold and intrepid young sportsman came forward at the right moment. Mr. Tom Preston, of Skipton, solicitor, was a much happier man when behind a brace of pointers, or up in the saddle, than he was when amongst his "cases," "briefs," or "parchments;" and on closing the door of his office behind him he closed the door of his mind also to all its dreary shelves of books on law, obsolete or modern, and set himself at this particular crisis to solve the question:—"What's to be done now?" After due consideration he found out a very short cut to its solution,

and removed all difficulty most effectually by commencing forthwith to collect together, from "here, there, and everywhere," that useful canine assemblage in the absence of a better selection, commonly called "a Scratch Pack." This proceeding on the part of their townsman was hailed with marked delight by all the Skiptonian Nimrods, and it soon commended itself to the approval of most of the sporting Country Squires, and the district was again assured that "the horn of the hunter" would soon "be heard on the hills." Peter Thornton was a "bit of a character" about Skipton at this time. He had been huntsman to the hounds kept by Mr. Dyneley. He was better known as a whip cracker than a horn blower, and went by the name of "The Crack Whip," because whenever Peter was asked by any of his friends to take a glass he invariably answered "all right"; then rubbing his arm he continued, "my arm is so rheumatic, I think its come on with cracking the whip." Old Peter, however, had not the honour to carry the horn with Mr. Tom Preston's pack. That office fell to Will Metcalfe, whose previous experience had been with the "Musical Hounds" of Mr. Robert Birtwhistle; musical for this reason, his favourite hound, Daphne, had such a fine soprano voice that he got a couple of deep-toned otter hounds to sing bass to Daphne, and so those Dogs of Harmony made proper music as they swept over the Skipton Hills. During the season that Mr. Tom Preston hunted the "Scratch Pack" they drew Hawbank, near Skibeden, one afternoon, and put up a fox from among the bushes that cover the southern slope of that "Haw." The fox went over Embsay Crag and on by Crookrise, Rylstone

Fell, and Cracoe Fell, and crossing the valley beyond Cracoe made northwards, landing the hounds at nightfall somewhere up in Littondale. This vulpine mountaineer thus gave them probably the longest run in the traditions of Craven hunting, but he made good his escape notwithstanding the very long run over this mountainous part of the country. That, and that alone, must have been the circumstance that enabled Reynard to save his life. The country was hunted for one season only by Mr. Tom Preston's hounds, and then they were afterwards handed over to a Committee, consisting of Mr. Johnson, of Eshton; Mr. Waddilove, of Rylstone; and Mr. Wasney, of Thornton; Mr. Johnston being the acting man.

From this period up to the present time the Craven Harriers have existed as a subscription pack. An arrangement was come to by which the hounds were accommodated at the kennels of Mr. Coulthurst, of Gargrave House, and Mr. Batty, of the Black Horse Hotel, Skipton, contracted for their board, and also found horses for the huntsman. Being fond of the sport, and quite a horsey man, Mr. Batty was often to be seen at the meets, when his well-known voice and the interest he took in the sport always put a little life and animation into the day's proceedings, for he was not the man to go to a meet of hounds to talk over the news of the day, or the rise or fall in the political barometer, like the men who "hunt in couples." Batty was looking out for a good run, meant being in at the finish, which he could generally manage to be, as he always had a "fair sort" under the pigskin, and was sometimes mounted on his

noted steeplechaser, "Singlepeeper."* His business engagements, however, compelled him to give up this "farming of the pack," as it was generally called at the time. The keeping of the huntsman's horses and the hounds were now transferred to John Petty, of Winterburn, a man as fond of a good horse and a good day's hunting as his predecessor, for his Wharfedale ancestor had hunted some hounds down in the Wharfe valley, and was presented with an engraved testimonial cup in token of his ability.

Ned Serjantson was the huntsman for a few years about this period. It was at this time that Mr. Johnson threw all his energy into the sport. He began by trying to improve the character of the hounds, and for reasons that will be mentioned in a future chapter, he introduced a dash of foxhound blood into the pack. His endeavours were liberally seconded by many friends of the hunt, and particularly by his neighbour, Sir Mathew Wilson, who gave a site for the Kennels at Holme Bridge that were built at this time. The position of the Kennels so near to Gargrave, and near the centre of the district, is probably the very best situation possible, with an excellent supply of water and accommodation in other respects such as is usually found and required about hunting kennels, conducive alike to cleanliness and health. The following inscription is on the front of the building :—

* This was the horse matched to run that wonderful mare, "Fanny Grey," in a Steeplechase at Skipton, and which he beat on two occasions.

THE SITE OF THESE KENNELS
WAS PRESENTED TO
THE CRAVEN HUNT
BY
MATHEW WILSON, ESQ.,
ESHTON HALL,
1851.





CHAPTER IV.

First let the Kennels be the Huntsman's care!
 O'er all let cleanliness preside, * * *
 For much to health will cleanliness avail.

THE CHASE.

MR. JOHNSON—THE FOXHOUND CROSS—TRY COLNE—
 BEST RUN OF THE SEASON—ROLLER FLOUR AND CORN
 MILLERS.

THREE days a week and well mounted, generally on horses of his own breeding, Mr. Johnson kept the game alive like a true sportsman. It might be that the "Kennels of the Craven Hunt" acted as a talisman upon the followers of the chase, for that it is something to live in your own house may be averred of both dogs and men. It was with laudable pride that Mr. Johnson led forth the pack from their new abode. "He was well built for the task," as "The Druid" said of the late Sir Tatton Sykes, "as five feet eleven by eleven stone five would about fetch him." But the transposition in this case was, when he walked he was five feet twelve, but when he rode he was twelve stone five. From his thorough knowledge of every part of the district he knew full well what points the game would

make for, and with a knowledge of the practicable fences of a country (there are some posers in Craven) a man has no necessity to be risking his neck at impossibilities. If there was the prospect of a good run he delighted to give his old favourite "Velocipede" mare the opportunity of shewing her speed, for she had the ability to go at racing pace when invited to do so, and she did not want much inviting. When a man is pretty well mounted he very naturally wants to have a good gallop across the country, and if a hare can be forced to break straight away that affords the longed-for opportunity. "Are your foxes ringers or straight runners," was the first enquiry made by the renowned "Mr. Jorrocks," when that celebrity took the hounds at "Handley Cross." Mr. Johnson had probably been turning over in his mind a similar query, and begun to believe that a little more speed in his hounds was desirable in a fine open grass country like Craven, and would prevent hares from ringing so much as they are liable to do in some places, and might have not unfrequently the effect of making many of them "straight runners." This was the main object of the foxhound cross. After the foxhound blood had had time to circulate among the pack, and with the judicious drafting of some of the lowest of the hounds, the standard of speed was considerably advanced. The effects were soon visible, and hares were now sometimes driven clean away; compelled, as the saying is, "to cut their country." Syke House and Brockden were meets that often had the benefit of this speed, and hares were driven clear away over Whitemoor, as though they were going to "try Colne," as the cotton spinner's wife said to her

marriageable daughters. The Lancashire gentlemen generally came to Syke House and the other meets in that locality, and they rather liked crossing Whitemoor, as a run over that common took them some distance on their return journey. Hares did not always run over Whitemoor, they sometimes pointed for Pendle, as the following run will show.

It was a November day, the moors had snow on their summits, and the frost over-night delayed the arrival of the hounds that morning. Brockden was the meet. A number of Lancashire gentlemen had sent their horses on to that comfortable "public," Syke House, preferring to drive that cold morning. When the hounds did arrive it was a long time before a hare could be found, and the "field" were scattered about in all directions, some "slashing hedges" and others "thistle whipping." Eventually a farmer put up a large hare, and his cur dog, which was evidently accustomed to it, commenced a rapid but silent pursuit. I shall never forget the pleasure it afforded me to gallop that cur off the game, and so be the means of securing one of the best runs of the season. Jack Holmes, the huntsman, with a rather weakish "toot-toot" on his horn, soon put the hounds on the line, and away they went at a merry pace, and were out of sight before several of "the field" were aware they were off, and making for the Gisburn and Burnley turnpike road, with both scent and speed at high pressure. That road was soon crossed, and on they went for Ellgill Mill (what a name, and what a gill for a mill). After some slow hunting about some cabbage gardens near this spot, where his supper had probably been taken

during the previous night, the scent was again very strong, and the music of the pack, as they breasted the rising ground up by Salem Chapel and then forward to Martin Top, was truly charming. On they went for the great Midhope Gill. Here the farmer was "looking his sheep," and when the hounds "burst on his astonished gaze" he holloed to the huntsman, exclaiming, "Where do yaw come thro?" but Holmes not stopping to parley, cried "Gargrave," "yo hoic forward; yo hoic forward." "I want nowt we yaw," shouted the farmer, "yo hoic forward; yo hoic forward," replied Jack, but the farmer pursued Jack until he was fairly out of breath with shouting and ordering him off. Then the scent began to fail along this deep, damp, and woody dingle. The hare had crossed and re-crossed, but Holmes would not give it up. His purpose was first to tire out the farmer, which he soon accomplished, amidst the fainter and fainter execrations of the tired-out tenant; and then to draw the Gill to the top and finish with a kill. But it was not to be, for higher up the Gill snow was lying, and it was indeed disappointing to be baffled by this unfortunate circumstance. The few who had the good luck to be in this capital run saw the lowering clouds soon obscure the dark mass of Pendle, which seemed almost to overshadow the spot as they turned their horses' heads for the ride back to Syke House. It was here they found some "thrown out" friends awaiting their return with a spread out of sandwiches, and a hearty welcome to "something warm." The incidents of the run were of course warmly discussed, and when it was told that a gentleman on a little bay mare had jumped a gate in

front of the huntsman, where half the top bar was off, and with Jack Holmes' ready remonstrance, "Nay, that's not fair, Sir." Jack's "Not fair, Sir," was heartily endorsed. It was a long and cold ride home that night; the wind blew cold, the moon shone bright, and it froze like the North Pole and put a stop to hunting for several weeks.

The best of horses and the best of riders may unfortunately come to grief, and do sometimes at most unlikely places. An incident of that kind happened during this season; a double accident in fact. It was somewhere between Marton and Gargrave; the gentlemen concerned were both eminent in the corn trade, and had ridden side by side through the Midhope Gill run. It was at a time when the hounds were hunting very slowly; there was a drop fence into the next field, and it was very low on the "taking-off" side, with a very soft ditch on the other. They both went very slowly at it, about some forty or fifty yards apart. They both rode capital horses, but then a good horse is no better than a middling brute when his fore feet are stuck fast in a soft ditch, and that was what happened in this case. Both horses came down. Mr. Wasney, who witnessed this rolling scene, emphasised the accident by exclaiming "Whatever's the matter with the Millers?" "Roller Flour" had not then come into use in this country, or it is highly probable "the veteran sportsman" would have kindly, and not inappropriately, applied it to this double accident, which very happily resulted without injury to either riders or horses.

From 1837 up to 1852 or 1853 Mr. Johnson had held the mastership, some 15 or 16 years. The change that now took place is recorded in the next chapter. This was about the very height of Mr. Johnson's hunting career, though he subsequently took the mastership again. When a sportsman has his horses in good fettle he does not want either to turn-out or shut-up when "hare hunting ends." So Mr. Johnson prolonged his hunting seasons by a move down to Harrogate for a few weeks with the Bramham Moor.





CHAPTER V.

But stop my muse—haste not so far away !
 I'll woo thee in my native vale to stay ;
 Its beauties be thy theme—the woods and dells,
 Sequester'd bow'rs, and sweet melodious bells ;
 The flow'r-deck'd lawn, the distant heath-crown'd hills,
 Stupendous rocks, and softly murmuring rills.

AIREDALE.

MALHAMDALE — A GALLOPING CART MARE — TAKING
 DIMENSIONS—SHORT OF POWDER—WINDY—A PUBLIC KILL
 —ARTISTS—DROWNED ON DRY LAND.



WE must now “ hark back ” to Eshton, and record a circumstance of great interest and satisfaction. It is no less than the marriage of the young Squire of that beautiful domain. That his happiness might be both domestically and locally complete was the earnest wish of every one, and his acceptance of the mastership of the Craven Harriers was the crowning circumstance at this happy event. Mr. Wharton Wilson and his bride went to reside during the hunting season at that quiet and quaint old residence, Hanlith Hall, which lies so secluded on the eastern bank of the infant Aire, with the fine tall tower of the Parish Church of Kirkby-Malham and the antique gables of the old village clustering around it right in front, at the opposite side

of the valley, and the towering rocks of Malham Cove and Gordale at no great distance, closing up the valley on the north, and in fact within sound of the horn. The Harriers had but seldom visited this top part of the Aire valley, so the woods and hills around got an extra waking up that season, and the enthusiasm of the farmers was roused up in proportion to the novelty of having the Master of the Hounds residing among them.

They hunted now, who ne'er did hunt before,
And those who hunted then now hunted more.

On one occasion when the game was found in Hanlith Wood and made for the hills above, a farmer who was carting manure, touched by the music, loosed his mare out of the cart, threw down the gears, then mounted bareback, and off he went at full gallop, his mare in the head collar only, making desperate efforts to see the run and be in at the finish. And so he was, and has often told the story. "I galloped as hard as ever I could. It was a famous hunt, it was that; and I saw a good deal of it too. I was in at the death, and they gave me the hare." To save the hare and hand it to the farmer on whose land it was found is one of those little kind attentions that creates and cements a good feeling between the farmers and the hunt, and is not detrimental to the pack, especially at the latter part of the season, when the hounds may be supposed to have been rewarded already with plenty of the game. A good number of amusing incidents happened during this season. On one occasion, when the hounds came to a check down one of the narrow lanes that radiate from the south side of

Airton, the village tailor, who had "three acres and a cow" at that day, was engaged spreading manure in his meadow, when a servant-lad walked up to him to get measured for a new suit of clothes. The tailor out with his tape, and proceeded to take his dimensions. It is the custom with these lads to get a new "rig out" to appear in at the annual hiring fair at Longpreston on the first of March. And so these country "knights of the thimble" are kept pretty busy from Christmas up to that date.

"It's a rather awkward predicament to find your horse astride of a wall, and very ludicrous to those who are looking on. But so it was with a gentleman on a young grey horse, when attempting to take a gap in a wall he only succeeded in landing astride the opening, and was at once greeted with "Short of powder, Sir, short of powder." That grey got some "powder" lessons after that, and eventually learnt to "fly." A good deal of hilarity was caused when a desperate puller of a galloway ran away with his rider, who lost his hat in the strong wind that was blowing. "Plenty of wind both above and below him" was the "blow" that followed. Indeed the special sporting artist of "Punch" might have been among the company, for in the very next week's edition of that popular paper there appeared a sketch of "Mr. Briggs with the Brighton Harriers" in a similar predicament. Fancy a fifteen stone man riding in spectacles, and mounted on a very wilful thoroughbred, going it pretty speedy down a steepish hill side; into a soft gutter goes his fore feet and down he comes, and the fifteen stone goes rolling away down the hill. No wonder if

some one says "the horse should have carried the lamps." We not unfrequently read of a fox being run into an old shed or other such shelter about a farmyard, but one does not often hear of a hare being run into a public house and killed there. This rare termination to a run, however, happened during the mastership of Mr. Wharton Wilson. "The Meet" was "Cross Roads, Silsden Moor." A hare was found on a large pasture called "Parson's Piece." After a short "ring" or two she was driven in the direction of Addingham. Hearing the hounds coming down a lane off the moor in full cry, a number of people assembled together in the turnpike, on the lower side of which stands a small inn, a little back from the road. Hard pressed "puss" made a rush for the passage, the doors of which were open front and back. At the moment she bounded over the front door step some men entered the other end of the passage from the back yard. There was no escape; dogs behind and men in front, she was killed in the passage. There is a painting at Eshton Hall representing the Craven Hunt, and the scene is said to be "Cross Roads, Silsden Moor." I am unable to say positively whether the "public" kill at Addingham is the run depicted or not, but it probably may be, for Mr. Wharton Wilson is well known to be a first-class amateur artist, as "The Grouse" and "The Swan" at Gargrave, and "The Buck" at Malham, amply prove; and it certainly looks within the bounds of probability that these paintings might become the cause of litigation for ownership in the next century, as a celebrated "public" sign by David Cox has been in this. After the Addingham

“public” kill it began to be the general talk that hunting could and did furnish as many exciting incidents as any one of the other five or six public amusements.

It was not long before another circumstance happened to prove this view. A meet at Halton West had very nearly been made memorable by a disaster. A good contingent of sportsmen had come to the meet from Clitheroe, Burnley, &c. A hare took the hounds clear away out of the Halton liberty towards Wigglesworth, but doubled back on the right hand side of the road that leads to Forest Becks. Here in a large pasture were several “shaking bogs” which, to a stranger, are from their generally green appearance not very easily distinguishable, and especially from the back of a galloping horse. An enthusiastic young Lancashire sportsman rode his horse splash into one of those treacherous bogs. In one minute the horse sunk so deep as to have only head, neck, and saddle visible. The rider with cool presence of mind quickly tied his whip to the bridle, and throwing himself out of the saddle, sprawled out as best he could by the slender aid of another whip or two thrown towards him. In the meantime someone rode off to a farm house for a cart rope with which to help out the horse. It took some time to extricate the plunging horse from this dangerous position. While his friends were scraping the mud and water from his clothes, other parties were paying a like attention to his trembling steed. When this scraping was finished he mounted and trotted off home, having had as narrow an escape as it is possible to imagine of being “drowned on dry land.”



CHAPTER VI.

The Wildgrave winds his bugle-horn,
 To horse, to horse ! Halloo, halloo !
 His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
 And thronging serfs their lord pursue.

The eager pack, from couples freed,
 Dash through the bush, the briar, the brake ;
 While answering hound, and horn, and steed,
 The mountain echoes startling wake.

SCOTT.

MR. JOHNSON AGAIN—BORDLEY FEAST—A BEAUTIFUL
 RIDE—TRAINING THE ENTRIES—SONGS AND MUSIC—A
 GALLOPING DAY.



AFTER a couple of seasons Mr. Wharton Wilson left this part of Yorkshire, and probably found more exciting sport in the pursuit of the Red Rover, for he subsequently became M.F.H. in connection with the "Vale of White Horse." Mr. Johnson again took the Mastership of the Harriers, and retained that position up to 1857. During the many previous seasons of his mastership he never missed taking the hounds up to Bordley. It was a capital training ground for the new "entries," and somehow the hounds had generally an outing up to Bordley Feast. This important festival is said to commence on St. Bartholomew's Day, and

what was peculiar about it was this, that it continued until every household in this remote mountain hamlet, as well as all the households of the neighbouring farms, had each and every one visited each other. Given : the Hamlet of Bordley, four houses, and surrounding farms eight, the game could be kept up for a fortnight, "Sundays excepted," as advertisements sometimes are made to state. The visit of the hounds would, if deferred to the latter end of the Feast, be sometime in the early part of September, a time when hares would be plentiful though they might not run very well, and would consequently favour the training of any young hounds the master might have to enter. How the Feast and the Saint became connected it is impossible to tell ; that fact is lost in the dim mist of past ages, but at any rate the inhabitants kept his memory green by their annual feast. And what a feast. So far as outward show went there might be some aunts, but there was certainly not "Aunt Sally." Nor was any "performing pig" ever brought to distract the minds of the youthful mountaineers. One solitary toffy stall alone made its annual pilgrimage to Bordley, and distributed its limited list of spices, some of which might certainly smack of the orange growing climate of Old Bartholomew, but that would be the only connection between even in the days of yore. Now, alas ! the Saint is all but forgotten, but that would not detract much from the pride of the hamlet ; the departure of "The Laird" to dwell in a more sunny vale gave the fatal blow to the dignity that had been so long kept up by Saint and Laird and surrounding sinners at this festival time.

The immense pastures have not been reduced in size by any modern alterations, and the young hounds still can be instructed in their first musical lessons over the expansive slopes of these wild and solitary uplands. What a beautiful ride it is from the Kennels to Bordley. The rich slopes of Eshton, in all the open beauty of modern iron fences, across richly timbered parks, a stately mansion of extensive proportions and great beauty, on a most lovely elevation, backed by a winding woody glen through which runs an ever sparkling trout stream from the warm and sheltered Winterburn valley, in the midst of which stands that very uncommon and unique specimen of window architecture called "Friars Head," probably the residence of some of that "order" of a bygone age, giving that charming variety and antiquity which many such old halls and granges give to most of our northern dales. Winding up the valley through Winterburn, that boasts of a chapel built by the last of the Lamberts (for the family of the great "general" resided only a couple of miles away at Calton Hall), the road soon leaves those woody slopes for the "mountain path and open strath" that leads on to Bordley, with scarcely a tree to relieve the monotony of the stone walls.* But even with this absence of woods and hedgerows Bordley is blessed with rich meadow lands, whose hay can fatten a beast between November and May without the aid of cake or corn, and some of whose limestone pastures can send fat wethers of 25lb.

* In the valley above Winterburn is now being constructed (1887) a large reservoir for the purpose of supplying some portion of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.

per quarter to market in the autumn on similar conditions. But for all that, these rich limestone slopes are surrounded by dark, soft, and dreary moors, where the whip and the horn have brought into training many brave hounds that afterwards became the pride of the pack, and the leaders in the sport among the green round hills of Craven. Some amusing tales are told by the firesides of the farmers on Bordley Moor when the wintry winds whistle cold Æolian strains through the chinks of the doors and windows. And songs have from time to time been written by some of the native dwellers up here, in jesting comment on their adventures with curs, greyhounds, beagles, harriers, rainstorms, snowstorms, or any other of the many incidents by flood or field, the birthright of the mountaineers. Music and song were not by any means neglected at festival times. It might be thought out of place to introduce in this memorial anything of the kind that had not some direct reference to the sport with the hounds. In accordance with that sentiment it cannot be thought derogatory to append the following lines written to commemorate a galloping day.

BORDLEY HUNT.

It was Jerry on the Grey,
And Charlie on the Bay,
How bravely did they gallop
All the Day.

The Grey he couldn't tame,
The Bay was much the same,
So they gallop'd for the game
All the Day.

If ever you should be
At Bordley on the spree,
They'll tell how they gallop'd
All the Day ;

They'll praise each little nag,
And prove that none did lag,
But with the hounds did brag
All the Day.

They'll say "they felt so stiff,"
And that "they'd had eniff,"
That would last them until
The next Feast Day.

And when that day came round,
They all were gladsome found,
To gallop with the hound
On the Old Feast Day.





CHAPTER VII.

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mairs and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

SCOTT.

SHUTTING THE GATES—A RUN TO GISBURN PARK—
SALMON SMELTS—LUNCHEON AT BROUGHTON HALL—THE
FRENCH COOK AND THE GARDENER—A LITTLE CHESTNUT
MARE BY NO MEANS SLOW—TWO MILLERS “HUNG”—A
HUNTING SONG.

THE year 1857 was the time when Gledstone was represented at the head of the Craven Harriers. Mr. William Roundell only held that position for two seasons. He was a kind and courteous gentleman on the hunting field, and made no pretensions to be a hard rider, though he was generally at his “post,” and if he sometimes avoided the “rails” it might be attributed to his anxiety about the “gate”; for, like his neighbour, that veteran hunter, Mr. Wasney, he liked to see it closed when “the field” had gone through; ever mindful of the flocks and herds of the farmers. An excellent trait among sportsmen hunting a country like this, where such large flocks of sheep are wintered on those ever-

green hills. Hares were pretty plentiful during these two seasons, and the sport was generally good throughout. "Nappa Bar" was a favourite meet, and being on the Gledstone estate was perhaps more frequently made the rendezvous for the sport than usual. On one occasion a hare was run from Nappa to Stock, and the quiet little village of Horton was properly wakened up on the way. What with the blowing of the horn and the cracking of whips as the "field" went galloping down the village, the inhabitants seemed at first to look upon this sudden change into their camp with some amazement, but hearing, by and by, the music that was going on in the meadows behind their houses, they soon realised the situation, and joined the cavalcade in hot pursuit. It was a capital run, and ended with a "from scent to view finish." Another good run from "Nappa Bar" deserves to be recorded, as the hare was killed in Gisburn Park. The game was roused in one of the large pastures above Nappa. After going some distance in the direction of Horton, the scent being strong and hounds going fast, this very stout hare was forced to forget or forego all "doubles" or "rings," and turning to the right near Horton, made a straight run for Gisburn Park. Crossing the deep dell near where the viaduct of the Railway now spans Stock Beck, the Park was soon entered, and most fortunately the park keeper had a portion of the park palings down for repairs, and thus the huntsman and several others who were close up were enabled to enter the park. Jack Holmes galloped as fast as his horse would carry him, fearing lest the hounds might be foiled by the fallow deer. The deer, however, hearing the un-

wonted sound of the pack in full cry, grouped themselves beneath the ancient spreading oaks by the dingle that runs down the park, and the hounds viewed and killed their hare in the beautiful double avenue of limes that forms such an attractive feature from the lawn in front of the Hall, with Pendle Hill in the distance. Holmes was asked if he trembled all the way across the Park, both for "fear" and "deer." The Ribble at Nappa that fine morning looked tempting enough for a "cast of flies," and that remark being made to the Master, his very kind response was "would you like to try your skill on our portion of the Ribble here?" The 10th of April, 1858, was a coldish day to use the permission so kindly given, but when rewarded for your perseverance with five dozen of the young salmon, that was quite sufficient to keep warm the memory of both the donor and the day in after years; but still more so, as this was the last season that the infantile salmon were allowed to be tempted to their own destruction by the dazzling fly-casts of the disciples of old Isaac Walton. Mr. Roundell gave up the Harriers at the end of his two seasons, and 1859 saw Mr. Coulthurst, of Gargrave House, at the head of the Hunt, and he held the position of Master of the Craven Harriers for ten seasons.

"Broughton Field" was sure to be a popular meet now that the nephew of the Broughton Baronet was hunting the pack. Sir Charles proved how he appreciated the position, for he gave a splendid luncheon to the followers of the Hunt on one occasion when the hounds met there. It was an even wager which were the more admired, the "Canalettis" on the dining-room

walls, or the handsome spread on the dining table, headed as it was, in front of the Baronet, by his favourite dish of black puddings. The former might delight the eyes of the company, but the dark links appealed to their appetites so very powerfully that the French cook was soon called upon for a second supply. This French cook never allowed the secrets of his toothsome preparations to be found out, but the head gardener declared that the Frenchman insisted upon sowing a bed of onions every month of the year, if neither frost or snow impeded that operation, and so from this fact it was inferred that "young onions" were the secret that made many of his culinary preparations so much appreciated. Banknewton was a meet of well deserved popularity, for there were sure to be hares in plenty, and stout runners too, for they fed well on the fine grazing lands about Newton. With pastures of fifty and a hundred acres of good sound land, the going is not excelled in any part of the country. It is very tempting, when scent is good, and hounds are going with it "breast high" at the top of their speed, to give your horse his head, and go with the "first flight" over those fine open pastures, where the hounds cannot possibly get out of your sight if your "mettle and quality" be only well matched to your weight. It was at one of those meets rather early in the season, somewhere about the date when the boys of every village used to be singing

Remember, remember,
The Fifth of November,

that, along with the Lancashire contingent there came a young gentleman well matched with "mettle and quality," and apparently fully determined to try his hand

at leading the field. A fine hare was soon put off, away down at the very lowest point of Newton Low Ground, and pointing pretty straight for Coniston Hall seemed to afford a welcome opportunity for anyone so disposed to "race" for the lead. The rider of a "little chestnut mare," in whose veins flowed some of the blood of "Dr. Sangrado," and through him some also of that of the renowned "Dr. Syntax," when he saw what was meant, determined to stand up for the honour of the district and measure speed with this stranger, and whom, barring accidents, he thought he could "best." The "little chestnut mare" kept the pride of place until the hounds were stopped in the turnpike road close by the Coniston covers, when this kind and generous compliment was paid by the one who did all but ride first, "Well, I must say, the little chestnut mare is by no means slow."

The following incident also happened in this locality during a good run, when the hounds went towards Gargrave at a great pace, but made a sudden turn at right angles pointing direct to Broughton. The fence dividing the two townships is a small watercourse, with a post and rails fence on the Gargrave side, and a deepish drop to the Broughton side. The late Mr. Wm. Wilkinson, of the Victoria Corn Mills, Skipton, was out that day, but he was "hunting in couples" with another of the same trade from Leeds. Seeing the huntsman and some two or three more "fly" this fence into the Broughton territory, but seeing no friendly gap the couple hesitated and "hung back." It is presumed they might be discussing a rise in the corn markets, a much more interesting topic than a rise of posts and rails. Or it might be

a new dressing machine just patented by a great lawyer that was creating quite an uneasy sensation in the trade about this time. The run was soon over and the hounds returned, and it was then that Mr. Wilkinson, when chaffed at being "hung," replied in his dry sarcastic way, "There would be some rejoicing among the bakers if they only knew you'd 'hung' two millers."

The following verses commemorate a famous run from Newton Low Ground to Swinden Gills.

HUNTING SONG.

WAKEN THE ECHOES IN SWINDEN DEEP GILLS.

The day was as fine as December could show,
The sportsmen well mounted, and anxious to go,
From Newton Low Ground over Stainton round hills,
And waken the echoes in Swinden Deep Gills.

What music they made as swiftly they came,
Still nearer and nearer approaching the game;
And louder and louder, descending the hills,
To waken the echoes in Swinden Deep Gills.

Now memory recounts with pleasure and pride
The "Hark-forward" and "Toot" of the horn in that ride,
And the exciting chase, as we raced from the hills,
To waken the echoes in Swinden Deep Gills.

And now, you bold hunters, of this later day,
Shew us your mettle, come shew us the way,
The top of your speed over Stainton round hills.
And waken the echoes in Swinden Deep Gills.



CHAPTER VIII.

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt, through Cambus-more ;
What reins were tighten'd in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air.

SCOTT.

A PRETTY MEET—BAG FOXES—A CAPITAL RUN—A LITTER OF FOXES AT OTTERBURN—THE RUN TO MALHAM COVE—TWO HOUNDS AND THE FOX FALL FROM THE CLIFF AND ARE KILLED—A FOX HUNT FROM GORDALE TO FLASBY FELL.



TAINTON COTES is one of the prettiest spots for a meet of hounds in the whole district, and the gathering of "horse and foot" on the gentle slope in front of the fine mullioned-windowed old house, with a few "scarlets" among them, made as pretty a picture as the heart of any follower of the chase or lover of a pretty scene could wish. "Will Nightingale," the coursing judge, occupied this extensive grazing farm of some 700 hundred acres for many years. It was at this meet that "Bag Foxes" were sometimes turned down in the days of Mr. Johnson's mastership, for it has a fair open country north, south, east, and west of it; a condition supposed to be favourable to a "bagman."

The way the foxes were obtained was, when some sudden fall of snow took place on the north-western moors, and the animal could be traced to his "holdfast" among the rocks. So when any of the gamekeepers or shepherds on Malham Moor, Kilnsey, Arncliffe, or Pen-y-ghent track a fox to his lair, they set what they call a "kist" for his capture. When successful, they would go round to all the great sheep farms with their prisoner, and after sundry half-crowns had been duly captured they then made their way to Mr. Johnson's, at Eshton, to dispose of their prize. If Reynard only took kindly to chicken or rabbit a good run "next week" was confidently predicted. Probably one of the very best runs with a "bagman" was that which ended with a kill on "Airstones," a big pasture some seven miles away, which lies to the west of "Ryeloaf," and almost overlooks the town of Settle. The line he took from Stainton Cotes was in the direction of Hellifield. He went over "Hellifield Haw," that big round hill with its crest of wood that rises abruptly above the Railway. From this point he turned up Hellifield Moor; he then crossed Newton Moor Top and made for the Langber Valley, up which he travelled for about two miles, then turning to the right he followed the course of a small streamlet that comes down from "Airstones." The scent was good, and so was the "bagman," and the pace was severe for this rough stone-wall country. The large beds of rushes on "Airstones" proved too much for him, and the pack were there together almost to a hound, when they gallantly and gamely pulled him down. For the last couple of miles Langber Lane, which goes up the narrow

valley, favoured those who had persevered so far, enabling them to keep pretty well up; for the walls are big ones round about this locality. It was a cheering sight to see old Jack Holmes hold up the fox, and in a voice tremulous with delight gave many a "Whoo whoop," in which those heartily joined who had surmounted the many obstacles in this capital run with a "bagman."

A litter of foxes were once bred in a wood at Otterburn. Crookbeck Wood at that time was a very thick cover of Scotch fir, spruce, and larch, and a big drain near the centre had been taken possession of by Reynard and his mate. During the following winter several runs were had with some of this vulpine family. One of the first to shew his brush to the Harriers was a youngster who gave them a smart run of a couple of miles to Hellifield Peel, where he went to ground in some rabbit burrows in Tenley Wood. He had been on a visit to the place of his birth, and as there was no "earth stopper" at his adopted abode, his retreat was secure. On another occasion the fox that was viewed away made straight for Malham Rocks, and was actually run into the front of Malham Cove, and on being pursued on to one of the "benks," as they are called, or grassy ledges that terminate in narrow points on the face of this tremendous cliff, some 300 feet in height, a struggle took place between the fox and some leading hounds; the result was that the fox and two hounds fell from this dizzy height and were killed. A Skipton "Bard of the Glen," some years after, wrote a song on the subject, but he made the fox break his cover at Stainton Cotes (the bag cover it must have been), and then proceeds in a dozen

verses to describe the run, in which he manages to "spreadeagle" the field all over the country, landing the "Judge of the Greyhounds" at Settle. Then Mr. Wasney is "lost in the chase," owing to a topcoat "weighing twenty-nine pounds," a style of hunting garment Mr. Wasney never wore, for the only extra covering he shivered in on stormy days was a mackintosh of antique type and smallish dimensions. Mr. Wasney was seldom, if ever, "lost in the chase," but he did once lose his horse. The meet was "Eshton Tarn." The hare made several "rings" between Eshton Tarn and Winterburn. It was a close, warm day, such a one as will punish horses when the hounds go swiftly away. At last the hare broke away over the Lock Hills by Winterburn, a piece of uphill work, and was apparently making for the Brown Moor. It was on Lock Hills that Mr. Wasney's horse dropped down to rise no more.

Then touched with pity and remorse,
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse,
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant grey.

SCOTT.

But the Bard doubtless held the usual poet's license for his transgressions. Be that as it may, his last verse, the only one applicable to this run, is given here in remembrance of "Rattler," one of the favourite hounds that fell with the fox.

While the bright sun of summer shall dance on the Cove,
And lovers to Malham for pleasure shall rove,
The feats of this chase many a sportsman will tell,
When they gaze on that rock where bold Rattler fell.

A similar accident to this is mentioned by "The Druid" in his account of Sir Watkin Wynn's hounds, "Saddle and Sirloin," page 439. Now that the last story has brought us to Malham Rocks, and we are fox-hunting with the Harriers, this will be the best place to tell the tale of a run after a fox from Gordale Scar, that grand chasm and waterfall in the limestone rocks, the wonder and pride of Craven, and one of the sources of the River Aire. A fox had been seen several times by one of the mountain shepherds about the scroggs and nut-bushes that cover the steep cliffs at the entrance to Gordale, and where rabbits have burrows among the rocks. Word was sent to Mr. Johnson, and he took up the hounds. They did not find the first time, but the fox having been seen again another draw was decided upon. This time they had the luck to find the rover in the shelter and seclusion of the nut-bushes, where doubtless he had been making good use of the rabbit burrows. A rough and rattling run was the result, over about six miles, the greater part of which is high lying and softish moorland. Weets Moor, Calton Moor. Captain Moor, and Winterburn Moor was a roughish start, but the gentle incline of the three latter was a slight compensation. Then they crossed the Winterburn Valley and the climbing began, over the limestone ridges of Scarnbers. When these were passed they then crossed the Flasby Valley, and now it was up, up, up, by Flasby Woods, and out on the top of the cold Fell the scent failed, and the fox was lost.



CHAPTER IX.

The weary traveller forgets his road,
And climbs the adjacent hill, the ploughman leaves
Th' unfinished furrow ; nor his bleating flocks
Are now the shepherd's joy ; men, boys, and girls
Desert the unpeopled village, and wild crowds
Spread o'er the plain, by the sweet frenzy seiz'd.

THE CHASE.

GARGRAVE HUNT—GARGRAVE FAIR—CAPTAIN BLAKE—A
RUN IN A MIST—HUNTING ON WHEELS—THE LAST MEET.

THIS favourite hunting day was the 12th of December, that being the day after the annual Gargrave Fair. The day was observed as a sort of hunting holiday by all the inhabitants who were neither too old nor too young to take part in the pleasures and sport of this annual hunting day. No inconsiderable numbers from the surrounding district who could "muster a mount" joined the mounted portion, and an interesting cavalcade they were ; on frisky cobs, on racing ponies, on carriage horses, on cart horses, and on any other sort whether duffer or donkey, it mattered not, they all helped to make up an interesting, and in turn, when the chase began, an amusing spectacle. Preceded by the great cattle fair of the previous day, where

once upon a time, before the introduction of the railway system, all the chief graziers of the neighbourhood used to shew their Christmas fat stock, and a very fine display they made, and quite equal to any of our local markets of the present day. Then there were the dealers, with droves of Scots, and a large and miscellaneous collection of other sorts from all parts of the surrounding country. There are few such picturesque fairs at the present day, for besides the bustle and bravery of so large a cattle fair, the principal street was set out with a double row of stalls by the traders in blankets and flannels, cloths and fustians, together with the ever noisy vendors of nuts and oranges, and a variety of inferior spices. Besides these there was the "long and enclosed" stall, or as its owner, taking a step in advance of the smaller fry, designated it, "The Bazaar," under whose shade were set out tier above tier, in great variety (it was thought so then), tea-pots and tea-caddies, work-boxes and work-baskets, and to adopt the advertisement jargon, "a variety of other articles too numerous to mention." A homely feeling and a kindly sympathy pervaded the place then, for the ladies in the neighbouring halls mingled in the scene to make their annual purchases of blankets and flannels and other comforts for the poor. Weather is not always to be depended upon on the 12th of December, but when the day proved fine, it was a cheering sight to witness the hilarity of the crowd that gathered at eleven o'clock on the top of Kelper Hill. On one occasion, while the hounds were in search of a second hare, Captain Blake entertained the spectators on this eminence by jumping the big post and rail fence that

crossed the summit of the hill, The fence was a pretty stiff one, being a four railer, though not quite up to "Kentucky form," where the blue-grass trotters are bred, viz., Mule-high, Bull-strong, and Pig-fight. The Captain went through his voluntary performances to the entire satisfaction of the crowd, for he was mounted on that fine white-footed mare which he had bought of Mr. Campbell, the agent of the Skipton Castle Estate, and she was noted as a splendid fencer at either stone or timber, and secured the Captain the brush in a very good run with a bag-fox the same winter.

A very sound country to gallop over, with plenty of hares, Gargrave Hunt generally afforded plenty of sport for both the mounted and the foot divisions. On one occasion, however, a thick mist enveloped the country, and then, indeed, "Dark December gloom'd the day." The hounds hunted the hare, and the riders hunted the hounds by the aid of the music, but unsighted, as the coursing phrase says. It proved a long straight run, for the hare was taken in the canal at Southfield. The mention of coursing brings to mind how "Will Nightingale," in the latter years of his life, came out in his gig, and managed, by sticking to the Broughton road, with an occasional detour on to the big pastures about Small-house (so dear in former days to the Manchester coursing men) to get, as he said, a very good day's sport for an old man, and on one occasion an especially long one, for when he crossed the River Aire at Ing-a-Brigs, on the road from Broughton to Skipton, "the shades of night were falling fast," and with the hounds close at hand he had the pleasure to be in at the finish, when Jack Holmes

blew his horn for retiring. The year 1881 was the last time the hounds were hunted round Kelper Hill, their withdrawal being necessitated in consequence of the greatly increased number of trains on the Midland Line that runs at the foot of Kelper, and which has now become the great Midland route to Scotland, and has certainly made hunting in that immediate locality very dangerous both to hounds and trains. And so Gargrave has thus lost one more of its old attractions, for the fine shows of fat Christmas cattle had long ago been discontinued, and the stalls of the various traders had dwindled down to nuts and oranges. The meet on Gargrave Green was more than picturesque, it was handsome, for many reasons: the town itself is one of the prettiest in the country, with the clear river streaming past, spanned by a handsome bridge, a tall Church tower, too, rising conspicuous above wide streets and spacious roadways. Add to this picture the gathering of hounds and horsemen on the Green, accompanied by a crowd of foot people eager for the start. Then the sound of the huntsman's horn as the pack are seen spreading away over the broad and rich pastures by the banks of the river, and making music in this lovely vale.

“A thousand hearts beat happily,
And all went merry as a marriage bell.”

The hounds may have the fixture to meet here at some future day, but the hunting will have to be done elsewhere. There are several capital meets not far away, and so they fall back on Banknewton, Newton Grange, or Stainton Cotes on the west, or The Kennels and Thorlby on the east. A meet at The Kennels generally

results in some good running along the banks of the Aire towards Thorlby and Skipton, and in consequence it frequently happens that both the river and the canal are crossed and re-crossed during a day's sport.

It was on one of those occasions when the hare swam the canal, and no bridge within a mile, that Mr. John Anderton, the respected V.S. of Skipton, seeing the hounds about to kill the hare, plunged in, and landed safe on the other side, when, having first seen the finish, he very coolly dismounted, and lying down on his back, elevated his boots to the perpendicular to get rid of the superfluous water. The discreet sportsmen on the opposite side found amusement quite ample in watching this performance, which was certainly much above pantomime form. The river does not afford much depth for swimming horses in, but there is a whirlpool where Eshton Beck joins the Aire, and this was the scene of an accident, which happily resulted in more alarm than misfortune. A hare had been "ringing" round about the holmes below the Kennels for some time, when suddenly the pack shot off in full view and full cry. This roused the whole field, and away every one went as fast as he could ride. A lady, well mounted on a spirited horse, was carried over some posts and rails close by the whirlpool; another moment, and rider and horse were swimming in the pool. The Rev. Henry Wilson and a couple of grooms made some efforts to reach the furious steed without success. After a lot of plunging about, during which the lady displayed great coolness, she cleverly steered her horse to the bank and rode away, damped certainly but not daunted.



CHAPTER X.

"But softer scenes on Malham Water view,
When its smooth breast reflects the azure blue ;
Or when the skiffs, departing from the shore,
Convey the lovely nymphs of Craven o'er.
The still lake ruffled by each rower's stroke,
And its smooth surface into surges broke ;
Anon 'tis ruffled like the foam-white sea,
Then smooth as glass reflecting every tree ;
The lofty fells upon its breast are seen,
Brown here with heath, and then with brackens green."

"AIREDALE."

MALHAM MOORS—MR. GASCOIGNE AND HIS PARLINGTON
"NINE-POUNDERS"—LITTLE JOE THE HUNTSMAN, AND THE
TWENTY-TWO STONE BUTLER—KIRKBY GRAMMAR SCHOOL
IN THE CHURCH—TRUANT BOYS AND AN IMPOSITION.



YOU can never be certain to what elevations enthusiasm will carry some men. There are Alpine climbers and Alpine hunters in all countries where such elevations exist. Malham Moors, with the modest altitude of one thousand eight hundred feet, is about as high up as any man would think of locating a pack of hounds. When Mr. Gascoigne, of Parlington, rented Malham Tarn House and the sporting

rights around, he brought a pack of hounds there, and hunted this elevated and rugged region. The walls are not only "posers," they are "stoppers," if a man be ever so well mounted; but then the enclosed pastures are most of them very large, as for instance Great Close, which measures about seven hundred acres, and is said to be the largest in the county of "sweet land," as distinguished from heather, or sheep walks, or commons. Twice round Great Close would be a fair good run, for it is a lumpy customer, and the double circuit would be about enough to finish both the hare and her pursuers. The hares were rather smaller than those Mr. Gascoigne had been accustomed to, so with the object of increasing their size he brought up a cart load of his Parlington nine-pounders. Woe betide their fate, however, for a severe winter following the season of their importation, with the accompaniment of a deep snow, they were compelled either to perish or travel down into the valleys below in search of food and shelter. Those that came down into the valleys soon fell a prey among the snow-drifts to the curs of the farmers and shepherds, for they had never seen such monsters in fur before. So whenever one was seen the hue-and-cry was raised, "A Parlington Hare! a Parlington Hare; they'd seen her in Gordale, or they'd seen her in Cove."

Mr. Gascoigne had a huntsman who was a very light weight, and he, in consequence of that circumstance, was generally known by the name of "Little Joe"; but that gave him no advantage over the big walls up in these parts, on the contrary, these big walls seemed to be everlastingly crying out to the little man, "Not for

Joe," "Not for Joe." It is said that extremes often meet, and so they did during the sojourn of the hounds at Malham Tarn, for the butler there pulled down the scales at twenty-two stones, yet notwithstanding this weighty evidence against him he was frequently accommodated with a mount. On those happy hunting days his practice was to ride along by the side of those impassable barriers, the walls, and when the hounds got away into the next great pasture he stood up in his stirrups to view the chase, and said "Not for Joe." If perchance the pack were lost to view, he was content to find a solace in the rising echoes among the rocks. What weighty slumbers this fat butler must have enjoyed after a hunting day, accompanied by charming dreams of the enchanting music of hounds and horn and echoing rocks. It would be about the year 1835 when the old Grammar School at Kirkby Malham was undergoing some repairs, and the scholars were then accommodated in the Vestry of the Parish Church, and just as they turned out for dinner one fine March day these hounds from Malham Tarn made their appearance on "Cow Close," a large "common" pasture just above the village. The happy moment was seized upon by several of the biggest boys for an hour's hunting, but that hour was soon forgotten under the thrilling influence of the chase, and so "adieu" to the precincts of the old Church Tower for the remainder of that day. Those "golden hours" went by, no doubt, "on angel's wings." The schoolmaster was no sportsman, and so the next morning he put an imposition upon the truants in the shape of that great and masterly epistle taken from the Second

Chapter of the Acts. Well do I remember how I thought the music of that hunt was to be banished for ever from my mind, by the confusion of tongues spoken of in this Whitsuntide Epistle. I have heard it read in that old Church many, many times since then, but it never failed to bring to memory that merry chase of boyhood. Times, and teachers, and schools have changed since that day, and now on half-holidays we see all the big boys of a school turned into a "pack," and away through the woods, and o'er hills and plains, goes merrily the "paper chase," and all return to the pursuit of their studies exhilarated by this mimic but pleasurable sport, and under no fear of an epistolary imposition full of hard names and a fearful confusion of tongues. Adieu to such discipline. Athletics and health are a better combination with study by far than confinement and consumption.





CHAPTER XI.

“The subject of hare hunting would be incomplete without some few remarks upon hunting the hare with beagles, followed on foot. It is a pretty sight to see a merry “cry” of these little fellows at work, and those who are not familiar with beagles would be surprised at the amount of sport which a pack, followed on foot, can show when the chase is properly conducted.”—BADMINTON LIBRARY.

ARNCLIFFE, LITTONDALE, AND MR. HAMMOND—KILNSEY ON THE WHARFE—RIBBLESDALE AND “THE PEN-Y-GHENT BEAGLES”—IN MALHAMDALE, AND IN “THE FIELD.”



HE hunting with beagles in Craven has probably as much antiquity connected with it as harrier hunting, and especially as it was, and still is, conducted in the upper parts of the Craven Dales, over the large and elevated rocky pastures and commons, and the still more elevated heathery moorlands. The tops of Wharfedale and Ribblesdale can probably lay claim to as much of this kind of sport as any part of the district. Arncliffe and Littondale have had a fair quantity of this kind of hunting as any of the uplands or mountainous valleys, for Mr. Hammond kept beagles

and hunted this part of Craven for many, many years, and occasionally hunted a couple of days at Horton and also around Austwick or Clapham previous to Mr. Christopher Ingleby's harriers in that locality. Kilnsey on the Wharfe can also lay claim to some years of this sport, with a spirited pack that often made the great prominent Kilnsey Crag, which projects into the dale, echo with their music, and so all along the extensive limestone ranges in this romantic part of Wharfedale when the beagles were in full cry.

“ Up among yon cliffy rocks,
Sweetly sounds the rising echo.”

We must now turn into Ribblesdale, where this hunting on foot with a pack of beagles is carried on with much spirit at the present time. The meets are regularly advertised in the Yorkshire newspapers under the title of that well-chosen name “The Pen-y-ghent Beagles.” That abrupt mountain called Pen-y-ghent towers in strikingly beautiful as well as romantic outline at the head of this dale, and gives from its western side a large contribution to the River Ribble, and all around the head of the dale is ample room for hare hunting. Mr. John Foster, who resides at Horton-in-Ribblesdale, established this pack in the year 1883, and has shown excellent sport, and plenty of it, since that time, for it is on record that it has been no uncommon thing to kill three hares a day, and they have been known only to compound when five hares were the number killed. That this topmost part of the Ribble valley is most suitable for beagle hunting may be seen by the steep scars

and very prominent moorlands through which the Midland Railway line runs. Some adjacent localities have had the pleasure of visits from this pack, as Malhamdale for instance. An account of a day's hunting with them at the head of Airedale, by invitation, in 1885, is taken from the "Field" newspaper. "The immense limestone cliffs that put a stop to the valley of the Aire at Malham includes the Cove Scar, 360 feet in height, and also the immense chasm and waterfalls of Gordale, equal in height with the Cove, scenery unsurpassed in any part of Yorkshire. A hare was found between the village and Gordale, and away they went, up and up, and higher and higher, then turning westward over the Broad Scars (some fifty acres of bare limestone plateau) they crossed the dry valley of Cown Scars above the Cove, and made for Pikedhaw, 1400 feet high. From this elevated position the beagles descended to the Cove, from beneath whose base issues the Malham stream, and the music and echoes were very grand as the merry pack dashed gallantly after the game hare, which they viewed as she issued from the thick hazel brake at the foot of the lofty scar. Again it was up and up to the dry valley above, which was crossed once more, and a splendid finish was made in one of the large adjoining pastures. The day was beautifully fine, and a large field of foot hunters witnessed the whole run from many points of the towering rocks. The hares are clippers to go in this dry limestone country, and this one was seen to jump several big walls during the run." This day's hunting was Wednesday, February 11th, 1885, at Malham. On Friday following (February 13th) the meet was about three

miles lower down the Aire valley, at Scosthrop Foot Bridge, and comprised a muster of about one hundred and fifty of all ages, from the veteran of seventy to the school boy of seven, for the village school had a happy half-holiday that day. The Pen-y-ghent Beagles are a nice level pack of about a dozen couples, of beautiful colour, with plenty of speed and capital voices, and 15 inches is their standard height, a size that has the approval of the best authors upon this style of hare hunting at the present day.





CHAPTER XII.

THE MASTERS OF THE CRAVEN HARRIERS FROM THE
LAST QUARTER OF THE LAST CENTURY DOWN TO THE
PRESENT TIME, 1889.

MASTER.		HUNTSMAN.
Mr. Stephen Tempest	... ..	Wheelhouse.
Mr. J. N. Coulthurst 1825—6.	... ..
Sir Charles Tempest 1827 to 1833.	... ..	K. H. Smith
Sir Mathew Wilson 1834—35—36.	... ..	Holmes.
Mr. Tom Preston 1836.	... ..	Will Metcalfe.
Mr. Johnson 1837 to 1853.	... ..	Ned Serjeantson.
Mr. Wharton Wilson 1854—55.	... ..	Joe Outhwaite.
Mr. Johnson 1856.	... ..	Holmes.
Mr. W. Roundell 1857—58.	... ..	Holmes.
Mr. J. Coulthurst 1859 to 1869.	... ..	Cumings.

MASTER.			HUNTSMAN.
Colonel Robinson	...	...	Cummings.
1870—71—72—73.			
Captain Henderson	...	...	John Tobin.
1874 to 1886.			
Mr. Amcotts Wilson	...	...	John Tobin.
1887—88—89.			

The following notice of the hounds has recently appeared in the local newspapers, and is supposed to convey a pretty correct idea of the present character of the pack :—

THE CRAVEN HARRIERS.—The time of year has once more come when “hare hunting begins”; and a few private meets take place on some moorside farms for the purpose of a little practice for the benefit of the young hounds “entered” this season. “The Pack” are looking very well, and shew very distinctly how the introduction of the foxhound blood, more than 30 years ago, has been carefully and very successfully carried on up to the present time. As for size, they have not been made too big for hare hunting, and they show great uniformity, and in colour an almost charming similarity. Among the foxhound packs that have contributed to this effect the most worthy of mention are :—Lord Middleton’s, the Belvoir, and the Quorn. Then follow Blankney, Bramham, Badsworth, and Holderness. In the 20 couples that now form the pack for the meeting of the season of 1889 there are not more than five couples of the old harrier blood left. Their level appearance and good manners do credit to the huntsman, Mr. Tobin, under whose care they have been for more than ten years.—G.

The paragraph about the pack may answer the purpose of a record of their appearance at the present time, and may possibly be of some little interest at a future date. It may be interesting to make a record of what the meets were like in former times. They were not without animation, and but seldom limited in numbers, bent on sport, bent on horse-back exercise, and the fresh breezy air of "the green hills of Craven." Hunting was more indulged in generally in this district by both farmers and tradesmen in some of the bygone decades that occupy the pages of some of the preceding chapters of this account. It may be that more hunting men will join in the sport in the future years, for at this present time farmers and breeders of horses have as good an opportunity as ever was known to profit by an improved breed of horses, and especially such as are suitable for a little field work with the hounds. Young horses of size and quality have long been trained to hunting by the enterprising farmers of many counties, and so if Craven men can thus enjoy pleasure and profit at the same time it certainly is

"a consummation devoutly to be wished."

Opinions have differed, and may still differ, respecting the continuance of hunting in this very fine district of large green upland pasture lands, the finest and largest in this great county for a pack of harriers to be hunted over. Well, here and there a farmer, and here and there a small proprietor, may have an objection to hunting over their land. These objections spring from that source from whence no sporting fancy flows. The ex-

tensive estates, however, of those who have had the honour and pleasure to be the “Masters of the Hounds” is an ample assurance that no extinguisher can ever be put upon that lamp of pleasure, Hunting in Craven.





